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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT,
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2004

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Turkey to send humanitarian aid to Tal Afar - Sabah
Turkmen flee US bombing in Tal Afar - Milliyet
Despite Ankara's warning, US continues Tal Afar operation -
Sabah 9/12
Gul calls Powell about Tal Afar - Aksam 9/11
Karamanlis: Greeks want a European Turkey - Hurriyet
Bush commemorates Beslan victims - Aksam
Verheugen: Turkey can't join EU before 2015 - Hurriyet 9/12
Sharon warns against civil war in Israel - Milliyet

OPINION MAKERS

Turkmen: US operations kill 100 in Tal Afar - Radikal
Peshmerge join Tal Afar siege by US forces - Zaman 9/12
US indifferent to Turkmen - Radikal 9/12
US commemorates 9/11 victims - Cumhuriyet 9/12
US remembers 9/11 under the shadow of terror - Radikal 9/12
US operations turn Baghdad into a battlefield - Cumhuriyet
Seymour Hersh holds Bush responsible for Abu Ghraib -
Cumhuriyet
Bush leads Kerry by 9 points - Cumhuriyet 9/11
Khartoum rejects Powell's genocide claims in Darfur -
Cumhuriyet 9/11
UNSC to impose oil embargo on Sudan - Zaman 9/11

BRIEFING

Tal Afar crisis: Fighting in the predominantly Turkmen city of Tal Afar, thought to be a haven for fighters crossing into Iraq from Syria, has displaced an estimated 100,000 people, papers report. US troops have surrounded the city, making it hard for civilians to get out and for aid workers to get in. The Turkish government called on US Ambassador Eric Edelman Friday to ensure that 'the civilian population is not harmed and excessive force is not used.' FM Gul raised Turkish concerns with Secretary Powell in a phone call Friday evening. Powell assured Gul that Turkey's concerns would be taken into consideration. The Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITF) has rejected US claims that there are Shiite Turkmen in Tal Afar who have been supporting the rebel Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr. 50,000 Turkomen have fled the city, the ITF said. Turkish papers suspect that Kurds returning to Iraq from Syria would be settled in Tal Afar just before a nationwide census in Iraq scheduled for October 12. The US bombings of Tal Afar caused hundreds of casualties over the weekend, Monday papers report. "Cumhuriyet" claims that US operations would displace the Turkmen from Tal Afar, and give the region to the Kurds. FM Gul said Turkey would send humanitarian aid to the region, an idea that has been welcomed by Washington as an 'important and positive move' for cooperation in Iraq. The US has notified Ankara that air strikes against Tal Afar were temporarily suspended on Sunday. Papers point to scores of injured in hospitals, and depict a deteriorating health situation due to a lack of water. The Habur gate, the border crossing critical for logistical support for US forces in Iraq, could be closed if US attacks against Tal Afar continue, "Milliyet" claims.

Ambassador Edelman on anniversary of 9/11: Turkey's leading daily "Hurriyet" carried an op-ed by US Ambassador Edelman on Saturday, the third anniversary of September 11. Edelman strongly denounced terrorism, saying that no act of terror can be justified in the pursuit of political or cultural rights. US forces in Iraq have been using a variety of tools -- diplomatic, political intelligence -- to counter the PKK presence in Iraq, and to render the terrorists ineffective, Edelman stressed. The Ambassador strongly rejected some Turkish press stories claiming American involvement in terrorist actions such as the terrorist school raid in north Ossetia. 'Such ludicrous claims are intended

to create negative views of the United States in Turkey and damage the US-Turkish relationship,' Edelman noted. Edelman emphasized that terrorists are 'unalterably opposed to the goals and values shared by Turks, Americans, and the overwhelming majority of others around the world -- freedom, democracy, progress, and a more prosperous future for our children.' 'We are appalled by their ruthlessness, but on this, the third anniversary of September 11, we are neither intimidated nor discouraged,' Ambassador Edelman concluded. Turkish synagogue bomber killed in Iraq: Habib Aktas, the suspected Al-Qaida operative behind the suicide car bomb attacks on two synagogues in Istanbul November last year, was reportedly killed in a US bombing attack in Iraq's Al-Ambar region on Friday. Video footage of Aktas' corpse was sent to the Turkish Ihlas News Agency office in Baghdad. Aktas was allegedly among the Iraqi insurgents who killed Turkish truck driver Murat Yuce in Baghdad in August.

EU 'confused' by Turkish efforts to outlaw adultery: Several EU officials blasted Turkish plans to outlaw adultery, saying that Ankara's proposed law was incompatible with its aspiration to join the EU. The Turkish government wants to ban adultery as part of an overhaul of the country's penal code. The ruling AK Party says the move would protect the family and strengthen women's rights. EU enlargement commissioner Verheugen was on a final fact-finding trip to Turkey before a progress report by the European Commission on October 6, which will form the basis for EU leaders to decide in December whether to open accession talks. Verheugen applauded the reform progress in Turkey during his visits to various Turkish provinces, including the impoverished southeast. Verheugen said he was 'puzzled' by the adultery debate, and pointed to the importance of development issues in the mainly Kurdish southeast. The outgoing EU enlargement chief said he expects EU-Turkey membership negotiations to take many years.

Zana to receive 'belated' peace prize: Leyla Zana will be invited to Brussels to receive the Sakharov Prize the former DEP lawmaker had been awarded in 1995, Turkish papers report. Zana is expected to address the European Parliament general assembly, and will join a lunch with leaders of political party groups at the European Parliament on October 14.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Tal Afar Situation

"A De Facto Declaration of War"
Metin Isik wrote in the conservative "Tercuman (H.O.)" (9/13): "The Turkmen population is being deliberately murdered in Tal Afar, and Turkey seems to be the real target as far as the US is concerned. Turkey's role and influence in the region has always been a problem for the US. Turkey first was insulted by last year's Suleymaniye incident. Now events in Tal Afar are the next steps intended to diminish Turkey's prestige in the region. President Bush seems to be blind to the ongoing presence of PKK militants in northern Iraq. But perhaps he is rather busy creating shadowy Shiite militants in Tal Afar. . Turkey cannot just stand by and watch the ongoing massacre against the Turkmen population. The situation is like a declaration of war against Turkey, and we should take necessary action to preserve our interests in the region."

"What's happening in Tal Afar?"
Yasemin Congar wrote from Washington in the mass appeal "Milliyet" (9/13): "According to US officials at the Pentagon, the operation in Tal Afar is an effort to avoid the establishment of 'another Fallujah' situation in Iraq. Officials underline that there is no American operation against civilians in the region, and they characterize their real target as terrorists who had come to the area from Fallujah and Syria. . US sources also note that the operation in Tal Afar started because the local Iraqi authority failed to establish and maintain order in the city. The Turkmen Front (ITF) has claimed that the US is aiming to establish a Kurdish domination in Tal Afar, but the US strongly denies the charge. The absence of an indigenous Kurdish population in Tal Afar seems to weaken support for the Turkmen claim. . On the other hand, Turkey's reaction is largely understandable. The Turkish public has had to cope with Barzani's statements regarding Kirkuk on the one hand, and allegations of a Turkmen massacre in Tal Afar on the other. Neither of these issues is easy to digest for Ankara. The current Iraq presents a picture of near-total chaos, and it is not easy to really know what is happening in Tal Afar. In a situation like this, using provocative language and disseminating one-sided information is a grave mistake. Both the Turkish media and the government have an important duty in this regard."